

Food and Drug Administration
Dockets Management Branch (HFA-305)
5630 Fishers La., Room 1061
Rockville, MD 20852

9/2/99

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SUBJECT: Docket numbers: 98N-1230; 96P-0418 and 97P-0197

To Whom It May Concern:

I understand that you are looking for ways to reduce salmonella in eggs. I believe the most effective and direct way to reduce salmonella in eggs would be to eliminate the practice of forced molting and that you must do more than put warning labels on egg cartons and regulate egg temperatures.

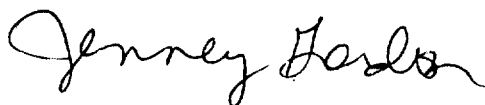
Every year, when egg production drops, approximately 195 million hens in North America endure a bizarre torment called "FORCED MOLTING". This cruel practice throws the hens' system into collapse, stressing and shocking their worn-out bodies into laying one more batch of eggs before being sent to slaughter.

The frightened birds are deprived of food for up to two weeks. Water is restricted for up to eight weeks and they are kept in pitch dark for weeks on end. As a result, hundreds of thousands die while those who survive grow weak, shed all their feathers, and lose up to 35 percent of their body weight. Forced molting also weakens hens' bones, resulting in fragile, broken limbs.

Recent research, including a study conducted by U.S. government scientists, shows that forced molting can be harmful to humans as well. The studies show that forced molting increases the frequency and severity of salmonella enteritidis in hens. The stressful conditions weaken their immune systems so badly that they become prone to disease and salmonella infections. The result is sick birds and contaminated eggs.

Please take action to stop the unhealthful and cruel practice of FORCED MOLTING in hens.

Sincerely,



96P-0418

C609

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HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION
CROSS REFERENCE SHEET

Docket Number/Item Code: 98N-1230/C609

See Docket Number/Item Code: 97P-0197/C610
96P-0418/C609